FOLLY;

A SATIRE ON THE TIMES.

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FOLLY,

A

SATIRE

ON THE

TIMES.

Written by a FOOL, and younger Brother to TRISTRAM SHANDY.

---------- *Pabula Stultitiæ*
Abſterrere ſibi, atque alio convertere mentem. LUCRETIUS.

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FOLLY;

A

SATIRE on the TIMES.

WHILE *Novels* ſtill the nation bleſs,
And *Lives-Hiſtoric* load the preſs,
While *Satires* dignify the times,
And Churchill mollifies with rhymes,
While *Party-Madneſs* ſhocks our peace,
Love baniſh'd far, and feuds increaſe,
While for his prudence *Kidgell*'s prais'd,
And *Crito* for his merit raiſ'd,
While miniſters neglect our cares,
And *Scraps-politic* ſtun our ears,
While claſſic bards are ſtyl'd unwiſe,
And ſcribblers hail'd for ſcribbling lyes,

While Nonſenſe, Rancour, Vice and Rage
Adorn our lives, and grace the age,
While nought but bawdry's ſure to ſell,
As *Farmer*'s Narrative can tell,
While authors jocund fill the land,
Why ſhould not I among them ſtand,
And ſhine ſuperior to the reſt,
A ſon of *Folly* here confeſt?
Can there be wanting themes or men,
On which to exerciſe our pen,
Or vent our ſpleen, or whet our wit,
With cacoethic ſcribbling ſmit?
Come, ſaddle Pegaſus, my muſe,
And FOLLY for thy ſubject chuſe;
Fortune, I truſt, will aid the bard,
When dunces are her ſole regard,
Low at thy ſhrine, behold he bends,
Worth's beggar'd grown, and wealth ne'er lends,
My firſt, laſt view a meal to get,
For I, like other folks, muſt eat.

Haſte,

Haſte, *Pridden*, haſte! thy preſs prepare,
Hunger is keen, and thirſt won't ſpare;
Forge any lye to puff the ſale,
Though *Butites* ſneer, and *Pittites* rail;
On town and country let us live,
By DUPING we can only thrive:
Our *betters* teach that leſſon true,
And not, like them, to ſpeak and do,
Were madneſs rank, and treaſon bold,
In poor, and rich, in young, and old.
Haſte, *Pridden*, then, and clear thy ſhop,
To vend the ſale of *Folly*'s crop;
Burn, burn thy *prints*, and, in their place,
Let my contagious poems grace.

Pridden. What, burn my *prints!* as ſoon wou'd I
Defame great WILKES, or from thee fly,
When thou a little caſh haſt got,
And my long bill is ſettled not,
As ſoon with *Bute* in party join,
With Frenchmen ſup, with Scotchmen dine;

Or, in one word, as ſoon would I,
To get a million, tell a lye.
Doſt thou, conſider, Sir, the fame
Thoſe *prints* confer upon my name?
Why profit now on books is vain,
(And who can live without ſome gain)
At leaſt ſuch books as you think beſt;
The *merit* in the *ſale*'s the teſt.

Author. I grant it all, you reaſon right;
Witneſs, I change my ſubject quite ------
No more ſhall wiſdom be my guide,
Or dull morality my pride;
No more ſhall precepts ſtain my verſe,
Or virtue urge, or truth rehearſe;
The ſons of Folly beſt ſucceed,
While ſages ſtarve, and worthies bleed.

P. If thou a fortune would'ſt atchieve,
Write, write *politic rhymes*, and thrive:
Abuſe the Miniſters, and whirl
Keen venom at a certain Earl;

Invent new ſlanders, forge freſh hints
For Blaſphemy --- to aid my *prints*;
Write Hiſtories, and Libels too,
And copious Novels not a few;
For learn this truth, our readers read
To pleaſe the fancy, not the head;
Their hearts are good, their judgment ſtrong,
Nor needs reproof or old or young;
To theſe well-choſen themes confine
Thy haughty Muſe, and be divine.

A. Agreed: but then ſuppoſe, my friend,
I write what conſcience can't commend.

P. Conſcience! was ever man ſo weak?
Will conſcience thy promotion make?
If that's thy clue, pay, pay my bill;
To follow conſcience is to follow ill.

A. Be not ſo raſh --- Thy counſel ſage
Suits well the morals of the age;
To ſpeed, therefore, is to comply,
Betray our friend, our foe bely;

Slay, plunder, cheat, without a ſhame,
And ſlide diſcreetly into fame.
Henceforth vile Libels I will pen,
To blaſt the deeds of honeſt men;
Henceforth obſcene Lampoons indite,
And honour'd Novels daily write;
Henceforth a man, in Scotland born,
(Although my friend) ſhall be my ſcorn;
Henceforth, malignant vulgar rage,
Shall fire my heart and fill my page;
Henceforth, a Pitt and Bute revile,
And o'er my country's ruin ſmile.

P. Since now you talk of Bute and Pitt,
I never once have heard, as yet,
Whom you eſpouſe.

A. I am no tool
To factious chiefs; be him the fool
Who will by either clan be led,
And is by hope or bounty fed;
Far other thoughts employ my cares,
Domeſtic views, and wholeſome prayers;

Let others fight the public ſtrife,
I chuſe to ſhine in private life.
PITT I revere; and, from my ſoul,
Wou'd ſerve his will from pole to pole;
If Freedom, and Britannia's laws
Call forth my ſword to aid their cauſe:
For Bute the ſame --- although, my friend,
PITT's actions moſt I dare commend.
From whence did Britain's glory riſe,
But from his councils juſt and wiſe?
From whence the people freedom gain'd,
But by his ſkill alone obtain'd?
It matters not what foes do tell,
Truth will prevail in ſpite of hell;
Not that I care who's *in* or *out*,
By neither I ſhall get a groat.
May virtue e'er ſucceed; for know,
The knave, not man, I call a foe.
Let parties then exclaim and write,
Or grin their mirth, or vent their ſpite,

To mind my own affairs will I,
And ſail with prudence till I die.

P. Beſt is that prudence which regards
Its private aims, and worth diſcards
Merely as worth. Look round, and ſee
Who *is* the man he *ſeems* to be:
Why publiſh'd *Kidgell?* ſpeak thy mind,
Of vicioufneſs to purge mankind?

A. Kidgell! I blame him from my ſoul;
He is in fact a brother fool:
Well had he done to cruſh in night
Such embryos vile from ſeeing light;
Than thus to publiſh them abroad,
And lay on guilt a heavier load;
In him, to read them was offence,
For Satan's ſin-traps lay in ſenſe;
And telling what I wou'd not hear,
Inſults my cheek, and ſhocks my ear.

Thus *folly* in a churchman grave,
Had in a layman prov'd the knave.

And Chriſtian charity benign,
Veils all defects in God's Divine.
So *Kidgell*'s conduct let us ſpare,
And leave him to his paſt'ral care:
Such errors raſh, I hope indeed,
More from the head than heart proceed,
For when hot zeal the fancy fires,
No wonder if the Saint expires.
Perhaps he thought his rank to raiſe,
By uſhering forth ſuch wicked lays,
As one, who, of a recent date,
Engroſs'd the whole venereal prate.
Lo, none but *Shandy* ſoars to fame!
For him and Bawd'ry are the ſame.
Without a meaning thus to pleaſe,
That *Triſtram* ſhould revive in * *Bays*!
And Parſons too, devoid of ſhame,
To write ſo curious Vulva's name!

* See the REHEARSAL.

Snigger ye wanton girls, the prieſt
Of Priapus is not in jeſt;
And all he means, full well ye know,
What man to Vulva is a foe?
None ſure I truſt, ſave him of Kent,
A brother-prieſt, a knighted gent,
Who hated what he ſhould approve,
In pillor'd-pennance wail'd his love.
Infernal wretch! thy life amend,
And dread Gomorrah's fatal end!
Strange things has SIXTY THREE brought forth!
And all by teeming Folly's worth.
Hail patron of my ſong and life!
The ſource of care, the ſire of ſtrife!
Before thy throne, as that of gold,
The rich and great, the young and old,
Chiefs, nobles, warriors, ſtateſmen, all
In mingled adoration fall!
Lo, deep within a royal dome,
(In part reſembling thine, O Rome)

The coxcomb-good exalted ſits,
Hemm'd in by knaves, and fools, and wits.
Cloſe at his right *Ambition* ſtands,
With Argo's eyes, Briarius' hands;
And on his left *Opinion* wooes
With jingling bells, and wooden ſhoes;
Wide o'er his throne *Shame* ſpreads her wings,
And at his ear vile *Flatt'ry* ſings,
While maſqueraders, not a few,
Amuſe his Godſhip's pleaſing view.
Abroad he walks; his influence wide,
Diffuſes now from ſide to ſide,
From *him* we catch our thoughts and airs,
Ideal joys, and real cares!
For what but *Folly* fires our hearts,
When peace the cry, yet war imparts?
He ſtill each realm deſpotic rules;
In ev'ry court he has his fools.
All Europe *Folly* ſet in flames,
Rogues tricking rogues, and calling names,

No matter what the provocation,
It was his will to ſlay each nation,
Full ſix years uncontroul'd he reign'd,
The ſeventh, a truce convenient deign'd.
Hail, wiſe, judicious, happy peace!
Lo, conqueſts halt, and ſlaughters ceaſe.
Who can enough thy merit praiſe?
To laſt as many nights as days!
From *thee*, by Folly ſway'd, what woes
And dire contentions have aroſe?
Wide and more wide he ſpreads his bane,
Slaying all men, himſelf unſlain:
Stung with his ire, in a raſh hour,
Wilkes wrote, and found him in the Tow'r:
Nor treaſur'd there what wiſdom taught!
So much his head with Freedom fraught.
To acts deſpotic ſome he urg'd,
For ſome gold chains for bondage forg'd;
Many he prompted to defame,
And ſome to write without a ſhame.

In various forms this Proteus rul'd,
Rogues he beguil'd, and knaves befool'd;
Till PRATT, in mercy to our woes,
Chain'd down the Fiend and gave repoſe.
But ſoon, by pride and rancour fell,
Thoſe chains he broke, and ruſh'd from Hell,
Inteſtine broils to ſpread anew,
And all our hopes of peace undo.
No more our words in greeting flow,
No more our friendſhips baniſh woe,
No more the pleaſing aſpect chears,
No more the ſocial walk endears,
No more the hand a welcome gives,
No more eſteem or candour lives;
But malice foul each heart inſpires,
And *Folly* kindles all his fires;
While every Preſs its poiſons ſpread,
To warp the heart and err the head.
If *Folly* WILKES provok'd to write,
'Twas *Folly* MARTIN urg'd to fight;

Whate'er their fancies might ſuggeſt,
Of wiſdom neither is poſſeſt.
Fight about words! ye heroes wrong,
Let Frenchmen ſee your valour ſtrong;
At preſent, lo! they ſneer aſkew,
To ſee you act, what they ſhould do.
If ever Britain falls to France,
Her ſons alone muſt point the lance!
This truth proud Gallia too well knows,
And e'er among us diſcord ſows.
O ſtill ſubvert her impious ſcheme,
Ye guardians kind of Britain's fame!
Still, ſtill our freedom thou defend,
And make her ſons one common friend:
Still GEORGE protect I further pray,
And teach his ſubjects to obey.

P. But when did *Folly* change her ſex?
The fair you wrong, the men you vex.
And WILKES, thou ſay'ſt, by *Folly* ſtung,
His *Briton* wrote; can that be wrong?

Our

Our Freedom to ſupport and guard,
When Hydra-party threaten'd hard:
Thou ſaidſt, unaw'd, he was not wiſe;
Beware! --- on ſwords there's no EXCISE ---
A duel may enſue; and then
You'll wiſh you ne'er had known a pen.
A. For that I call thy friend unwiſe;
In hell, not ſwords, the danger lies.
To guard our freedom I commend,
All ſuch I deem my country's friend.
But when a nation's known defects,
In public view he deep diſſects,
When indiſcriminately, all
In mangled heaps before him fall,
When bury'd crimes are brought to view,
However black, however true!
When, being born beyond the Tweed,
Is made a crime of crimes indeed!
When men are ſcorn'd for being poor,
Yet trouble not the rich man's door,

When I behold each page deſcribe
In rankeſt venom all the tribe,
Their faults expoſe, their worth defame;
What man but muſt the *Author* blame?
Examine facts in reaſon's ſcale,
And truth and juſtice let prevail.

P. So great thou tak'ſt the Scotchman's part,
Did not I know from whence thou art,
I ſhould ſuſpect thy country much,
But then thy name proclaims thee Dutch.

A. It matters not, where gave me birth;
I am, like thee, a ſon of earth.
The man of merit, him I call
My countryman, my friend, my all!
Tho' ſavage Lybia gave him birth,
Or ſable Guinea brought him forth,
Equal to me his rank, his name,
If he ſupports an honeſt fame.

Worth e'en in *Canibals* is found;
Is *England* then all holy ground?

Did

Did we in manners prove it true,
How wou'd I boaſt, and praiſe it too!
Know, merit cannot be confin'd;
God ſows his gifts in ev'ry mind:
Nor land nor colour he regards,
And virtue only he rewards.

P. Wou'd BUTE had ever done the ſame!
Nor made a foe --- but for his name ---

A. I grant he err'd to an exceſs;
A king of Scots cou'd do no leſs;
And well deſerv'd he *Wilkes*'s rage,
And all the fury of the age!
For what but *Folly* him inſpir'd,
Or with ambition madly fir'd,
Urg'd him to deeds of daring height,
That frown'd imperious, menac'd ſpite?
Each lord to ſlur, and fill each place,
From Devon's ſlave to Devon's grace,
And all with kinſmen of his own;
As who more fit to grace the throne?

Where-e'er ſuch partial conduct glares,
To blame the man no poet fears.
Give me the miniſter, ſay I,
And eke each man in office high,
To ſerve their country without pay;
Nor one prefer who mutters nay:
Altho' a needy brother pines,
Or worthleſs ſon in *Folly* ſhines;
That will eſtabliſh wholeſome laws,
And ſtill protect the ſubjects cauſe;
That none a Senator ſhall be,
That has not hundreds three times three
Per annum clear, for Boroughs ſmall;
And prov'd the patriot moſt of all.
For Counties, and for Towns of note,
Full thouſands two per year I vote.
Happy the man who ſees ſuch days;
To do it, PITT, be thine the praiſe.

P. But why in verſe, Sir, write your thoughts?
Proſe, you muſt own, yields fewer faults.

A. FOLLY, that all the world inſpires,
Kindles in me poetic fires.
Three days ago, and not before,
(As witneſs him whom I adore)
This motley ſatire I began;
Laſt Friday morn I fram'd the plan ---
The following eve ſome leiſure ſpar'd;
On Poetry alone I far'd!
Better, next day, I ſpent my time,
Than weighing words, and tuning rhyme;
And now, this eve, it finiſh'd ſtands,
To wing, perhaps, to diſtant lands,
E're nine days more are counted out;
So ſwift does *Folly* fly about!
If then the haſty-written piece,
(Unlike the wit of ancient Greece)
Yet uncorrected, low, and bad,
That prove the author not quite mad,
If us a dinner it will buy,
Why, take it; ---- Thou its fortune try ----

Careleſs

Careleſs I am what parties ſay,
And critics in their carping lay,
So, *Pridden*, we our end obtain;
For glory's not our view, but gain.

P. To hear you talk, a ſtranger ſure
Wou'd think you ſtarv'd, and wretched poor,
Inſtead of that ---- I ſee you dine ----
A footman too to hand the wine!
Happy Author! want you diſdain;
No more of poverty complain.
Few are the bards than you more bleſt,
So dull is trade, and ſuch the peſt
Of hireling ſcribbelers up and down,
This knaviſh, wicked, impious town.
But what provokes this angry lay?
May I preſume to ask you, pray?
For ſatire rude, and party foul,
Ne'er diſco[illegible] your equal ſoul.

A. Provok'd I am to ſee the days,
When folly thrives, and worth decays;

When

When works of merit lay unread,
As well the living as the dead;
When pure eſſay, in nervous ſtyle,
When eaſtern tales our woes beguile,
When moral pieces, well deſign'd,
The heart to mend, improve the mind,
Our thoughts enlarge, our ſouls ſublime,
And ſanctify our precious time;
When philoſophic ethics ſoar,
And revelation truths implore
Virtue to learn, to baniſh ſtrife,
And meliorate erroneous life,
Theſe when I ſee oblig'd to yield
In Britain's literati field,
To novels lewd, and ſpruce romance,
(Pierian imports from gay France)
With all the hundred lives of whores,
Of villains too as many ſcores;
This, when I ſee, my fleſh I tear,
And think my country's ruin near.

Or, what is worſe, the ſouls of all
Who ſtill this reading *Faſhion* call,
So great a grievance claims redreſs,
Nor harm the freedom of the preſs;
O Britain! why its doom prolong?
But *Folly*'s party reigns too ſtrong.
For what can more the heart pervert?
The genius, dwarf? the taſte ſubvert?
What more the young ideas ſpoil?
Or innate ſentiments defile?
What more the underſtanding cramp?
The judgment cloud? the ſpirits damp?
What more the budding virtues blaſt,
With vice and ignorance o'ercaſt?
Or, in one word to ſum the whole,
With falſe impreſſions warp the ſoul?
P. Your ſcheme to rectify the preſs,
Truth may commend, and virtue bleſs;
But *Trade*, which ſtill for neither cares,
Wou'd load your ſoul with damning prayers.

A. Wiſdom is proof to all ſuch ſtuff,
Nor ſhuns advice, nor hates reproof;
Alike the curſe and curſer heeds,
So goodneſs thrives, and ſenſe ſucceeds.
Folly indeed may fume and fret,
At inſult rave, at truth take pet;
Like ſons, reject what ſires adviſe,
And ſneer at being thought unwiſe;
Till ſad experience woe imparts,
And all the fool with torture ſmarts,

Oft have I ſeen, in *Folly*'s croud,
(Exceſſive pert, exceſſive proud)
A wretch, conſpicuous from the reſt,
Of all our patriots make a jeſt;
Their worthieſt actions rudely treat,
Of troops ne'er paid, of foes ne'er beat;
Our granted millions wrong apply'd,
Or vilely ſunk on party's ſide ---
Nor rank, nor ſex, not monarch ſpare,
But vent his ſcandal free as air!

Can liberty the man inſpire,
Who wears the yoke of baſe deſire?
For public freedom fight the cauſe,
Yet ſcruple not to break God's laws?
A ſlave to vice! however free
In ſpeech alone ---- as neighbours ſee;
Him you may truſt; the man I ſcorn,
If virtue don't his life adorn.
From freedom to religion next
His wit he turns. ---- Thence takes his text ----
Calls worthy biſhops hireling ſlaves;
Aſpiring deans deſigning knaves;
Shames the pure bluſh on virtue's face,
And damns the church for want of grace!
Vile hypocrites true Chriſtians ſtiles,
Blaſphemes the good, the wiſe reviles,
While brother-fools around him gaze
With all the marks of grateful praiſe.
Be dumb, mad wretch! who does not know,
To church and ſtate thou art a foe?

Becauſe in neither thou cou'dſt riſe,
On each thou vent'ſt thy rage and lies.
Egregious FOLLY! charmer kind!
That warm'ſt the heart, enſlav'ſt the mind!
Thy ſpreading influence, O forbear!
Nor longer taint the Britiſh air!
Thy dire contagion few withſtands,
So ſweetly-pleaſing are thy bands!
For who, but thee, whole kingdoms ſways?
And now inflames, and now betrays?
Who ſtill, but thee, exciſes frame?
And then thoſe bold exciſes blame!
Who ſtill, but thee, confuſion ſows?
And ne'er more pleas'd than making foes!
Who, who but thee makes ſenates jar,
While nations ſuffer in the war?
Great ones may fight for *neat proceeds*
But 'tis their country only bleeds.
When thou, O FOLLY, rul'ſt thus high,
Wiſdom beholds ſome danger nigh;
Trembling, ſhe weeps her ſlighted calls,
Though freely urg'd from both the *halls*;

Loath to deſert, ſhe daily cries,
Ye rulers mend, ye chiefs be wiſe;
Both, both your country's good purſue,
Nor ſtrive each other to undo!
Let party feuds be baniſh'd far,
And who beſt rule, not fleece, the war;
Let freedom tyrant-breaſts inſpire,
And virtue venal boſoms fire;
Let ſtate-crimes die, impeachments ceaſe,
And bleſs your king with love and peace!

P. May party ſtill with ſpirit reign,
And Folly all his rights maintain;
Or how ſhould we Bookſellers live,
When 'tis by both we pleaſe and thrive?
Art thou of either diſpoſſeſt?
Review thy life, and ask thy breaſt.

A. Too jealous of his native throne,
There honour'd FOLLY rules alone!
No other gueſt will e'er admit,
Sworn foe to party, as to wit.
Choſe I the public to inflame,
On others ruins build a fame,

A converſe once on themes of ſtate,
Shou'd I reveal, ſhou'd I relate,
There are, who many foes wou'd gain,
There are, who wou'd their ends obtain;
But I deſpiſe to hint a word
What raſhneſs ſpoke, or * *Mevius* heard:
Let others public ſtrife increaſe;
I am the advocate of peace.
To you, dear Folly's ſons I call,
My venerable brothers all;
For you I write this harmleſs ſong,
To you theſe fooliſh lines belong!
Your brother aid, your bard defend,
And prove yourſelves his worthy friend.
For know, if each beſtows his pence,
Me *Creſus* makes --- though not in ſenſe;
Since ſure we are, in number, more
Than leaves on trees, or ſands on ſhore!

* The AUTHOR.

Folly-Street, near Fool's Square,
12th December 1763.

F I N I S.